

Autism is One of the Most Pressing Medical, Psychological and Social Problems of Modern Society

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Abstract

"Children are our future" – this phrase sounds lonely in the whole world. I dedicate this article to special children, as they are also called "children of the sun" and their parents, who are starting life anew, changing everything that is familiar to them, because autism completely changes lives. In their eyes you see despair and pain, hopelessness and the search for a magic pill, that will cure their children.

Keywords: autism, ASD (autism spectrum disorder), special children, "child of sun", spectrum, stereotypical movements

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Introduction

In parallel with the modern world, where intensive globalization is observed in everything; in the world of technology, in science, in medicine, the number of births of unhealthy children is growing, and even an unhealthy future generation. One of such phenomena is the diagnosis of "autism". The purpose of this article is to acquaint you in a concise and understandable form with the supposed causes and ways to correct the behavior of children with autism.

Today, there is no exact answer to the question: "What is autism?" During a year of work (although not a very significant period) with special children and their parents, I observed and analyzed the behavior of different children with autism. And I came to the conclusion that they are all absolutely not identical, although they have one diagnosis: ASD (autism spectrum disorder). As psychiatrists in this field say in America, "If you know one autistic child, you only know one autistic child." This means that they are never similar to each other, although they have one diagnosis and common features. Of course, it is impossible to fully describe and deeply reflect the topic, since "autism" is a spectrum of global scale.



1. History of Autism

In 1943, Leo Kanner, an Austrian and American psychiatrist, known as one of the first observers of childhood autism, wrote in his first research paper:

"He wandered around, smiling, making stereotypical movements with his fingers, crossing them in the air. He shook his head from side to side, whispering or humming the same three-note motif. He took great pleasure in twirling everything that came to hand... when brought into a room, he completely ignored people and quickly went to objects, especially those that could be spun... He would violently push away a hand if it got in his way, or a foot that stepped on his blocks..."

This is a description of a five-year-old boy named Donald.

Since then, autism has not changed. L. Kanner noted that these children are characterized by extreme autistic loneliness, forcing them to withdraw into themselves, ignore the outside world and reject everything that happens around them. Kanner came to the conclusion that the cause of autism is an innate inability to establish close relationships with other people.

Hence the conclusion that these children seem to be from another world. Each of them lives in their own world, into which they do not want to let anyone.

2. Possible Causes of Childhood Autism

Again, I return to L. Kanner.

In his first work, he listed a number of signs characteristic of all autistic children:

"Extreme autistic loneliness" - consisted in the fact that the children could not normally establish relationships with other people and looked completely happy when they were alone.

"Irresistible obsessive desire for constancy" - children were very upset when there were changes in the usual course of events or environment. For example: rearranging furniture, changes in the usual order caused an outburst of rage, so that the child could not calm down until order was restored.

"Excellent mechanical memory" - these children could remember a huge amount of information.

Here I would like to add a wonderful example of the feature film by American director Barry Levinson "**Rain Man**", where the main character's brother has a phenomenal memory and is able to perform complex arithmetic calculations in his head.

"Delayed echolalia" - children repeated phrases that they heard, but did not use speech for communication.

"Hypersensitivity to sensory influences" - a violent reaction of children to certain sounds and phenomena, such as the roar of a vacuum cleaner, the noise of an elevator, and even a breath of wind, etc.

Today, we have many hypotheses about the possible causes of childhood autism, which are discussed by research scientists, child psychiatrists, pediatricians around the world. The search for causes has been going on for years and in several directions. Scientists are more inclined to genetic characteristics of the birth rate of special children. Nowadays, intensive research is underway to verify them, but unfortunately there are no clear conclusions yet.

Since after 2020, according to statistics, there was a significant influx of such children into special centers, there is also a hypothesis that COVID-19 affected the increase in the birth rate of children with autism, but this is not a fact.

There are a number of other possible reasons; unhealthy lifestyle of future parents, various infectious diseases, intrauterine infection of the fetus, etc. But all these reasons are refuted by many research centers, they are convinced that there is one reason - genetics. That parents should not punish themselves for having such a child. Because the human body is so unique, such a complex mechanism, which humanity has not yet been able to fully study. The fault of parents in this case is that they seek help late, and there are many cases of hiding their special children, supposedly "ashamed" of them, which can also be treated with understanding.

3. Features of Special Children

So why did they call these children "special"?

In modern life, doctors - psychologists, child psychiatrists refuse to call autism a disease, because it is not a disease, but a disorder and change in the mental state of a child or an adult. This was very well described and told in an interview with Kazakh journalist - interviewer Timur Balymbetov, with the participation of specialists in this field Marat Aitmagambetovich (candidate of medical sciences, director of the Bulat Utemiratov Foundation, Kazakhstan) and Connie Cassari (honored teacher - psychiatrist, professor and president of the International Society for Autism Research from California, America), where they deeply touched on the topic of autism, discussed the problems today in this area.

The diagnosis of autism is a fairly common phenomenon, encountered no less often today than deafness or blindness. This diagnosis affects not only one particular country or continent, but our entire planet. Their peculiarity is that at first glance they seem to be absolutely normal, typical children, but if you look closely, you can observe certain features that are not inherent in ordinary children: avoidance of gaze, stereotypical finger movements, separation from other children, ignoring people standing nearby. An autistic child can outwardly give the impression of being simply spoiled, capricious, ill-mannered, and misunderstanding, condemnation of others on the street, in transport, in a store greatly complicates the situation for both him and his parents. And this is one of the reasons for late intervention, or even complete ignoring of parents in relation to these children.

Watching living examples, I can say for myself that they lack consciousness, they do neither bad nor good, they just want to live in their imaginary "world". They are completely disconnected from reality, do not know what is happening around, in general, what is happening in the world.

4. How to Help in the Upbringing and Education of an Autistic Child?

There are several methods in the upbringing and education of "children of the sun" so that they can first of all independently serve themselves, the ability to indicate what they want with the help of gestures, which they completely lack, hygiene, training in academic skills.

But the main thing is not to leave such children alone with this diagnosis. Because the further and more mature the child becomes, he will go even deeper into his world. And it is very important

to identify the problem at an early stage, since it will be easier to correct the "undesirable behavior" of the child in the spectrum, as if to put it in modern terms.

Here, pets are great helpers, including horses, this therapy is called "hippotherapy", there were numerous positive results with such therapies, rather than with specialists. There is also therapy with dolphins, which gives instant results. But unfortunately, this is not available to everyone.

For the first time in America, ABA (applied behavior analysis) therapy was used, which has a significant effect in correcting the behavior of autistic children. ABA therapy is a method based on teaching a child functional and speech skills. This therapy is suitable for both children with autism spectrum disorders and for children with Down syndrome and various forms of intellectual disabilities. The goal of these classes is to help the child master new skills and the world around him independently.

5. Me – as a Witness

As a teacher – a specialist, working with special children, I am a direct witness in the development of various children with intellectual disabilities. Every day I come across parents complaining about the behavior of their children. In their eyes you see despair and hope that someday their children will become the norm, typical. Unfortunately, we are only specialists in this field who help correct their behavior. We cannot say that they will become like all other children, because this will not happen.

Some parents, although having a hard time accepting the situation as it is, and having resigned themselves to it, do not give up, the whole family adapts to the special child, and everyone works together. And this gives results, it becomes easier for both the child and all family members. But there are also those parents who stubbornly do not want to accept the diagnosis, and stubbornly insist that this will pass as the child grows up.

In October of this year, I came across one of the twins, both of whom were diagnosed with ASD. He was already 3 years old. His name is Ali. I worked with this child for three months, and during this time I only managed to develop a pointing gesture. This case is so difficult for me that I had to use different methods every time, but to no avail. It is hard for the mother, who was shocked by the diagnosis and she still has not accepted the situation. Ali is a cheerful boy. Typical signs of an autistic person, stereotypical finger movements in, walking on tiptoes, and when behaving in an undesirable way, he would hit his head on the floor. And sometimes, just watching Ali, I wondered: "What does he really want, why does he have hysterics and avoid doing anything?" He refused to make contact, did not allow himself to be touched, but surprisingly, he responded well to his name and eye contact was clear. He just wanted to be near his mother and get everything he wanted. Severe hysterics, bruises on his forehead tormented his mother all 24 hours. Every morning she brought the children with deep pain in her soul and despair in her eyes. Looking at the more severe children in our center, she felt even more uneasy. I tried to support her in every way, as much as professional etiquette allowed. This was one case out of many.

Conclusion

The world is so huge that you can't notice what's going on in the neighboring house, and so small that you can't ignore what's going on in it, because it all concerns everyone living on it. War changed the fate of one entire state, influenced the culture and customs of one particular nation, completely changed the fate of people. But still, humanity did not stop creating something, studied, researched. Science, medicine, technology - that's what never stops developing to this day. I liked the phrase of one famous person in the world: "I am not a resident of one country, I am a resident of the planet Earth" - how wisely said. Being in a small point of our planet, in a small country, in a small city, I can hardly influence or change something global in this world. But when one problem like "autism" concerns all of humanity, I thought that I was putting a piece of my power into changing for the better an autistic child, helping him to adapt to this huge world. This problem concerns each and every parent, because no one is immune from it.

Maybe the day will come when scientists will find solutions to many unresolved issues, problems of this world, including in medicine, doctors and scientists will invent a cure for various psychological diseases of a person, such as schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease, Down syndrome and along with them, autism.

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ПСИХОЛОГИЯ / PSYCHOLOGY

УДК

Аутизм – азыркы коомдун эң актуалдуу медициналык, психологиялык жана социалдык көйгөйлөрүнүн бири

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Аннотация

“Балдар – биздин келечегибиз” — бул сөз айкашы дүйнө жүзү боюнча жалгыздыкка толгон. Мен бул макаланы “күн балдары” деп да аталган өзгөчө балдарга жана алардын ата-энелерине арнайм, алар аутизм алардын жашоосун толугу менен өзгөрткөндүктөн, жашоосун жаңыдан баштап, билгендеринин баарын тескери буруп жатышат. Алардын көздөрүндө үмүтсүздүк жана оору, үмүтсүздүк жана балдарын айыктыра турган сыйкырдуу таблетка издөө чагылдырылган.

Ачкыч сөздөр: аутизм, аутизм спектринин бузулушу (АСБ), өзгөчө муктаждыктары бар балдар, “күн баласы”, спектр, стереотиптик кыймылдар

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ПСИХОЛОГИЯ / PSYCHOLOGY

УДК

Аутизм — одна из самых острых медицинских, психологических и социальных проблем современного общества

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Аннотация

“Дети — наше будущее” — эта фраза звучит одиноко во всем мире. Я посвящаю эту статью особенным детям, как их еще называют «детьми солнца», и их родителям, которые начинают жизнь заново, меняя все привычное, потому что аутизм полностью меняет жизнь. В их глазах — отчаяние и боль, безнадежность и поиски волшебной таблетки, которая вылечит их детей.

Ключевые слова: аутизм, РАС (расстройство аутистического спектра), дети с особыми потребностями, «дитя солнца», спектр, стереотипные движения